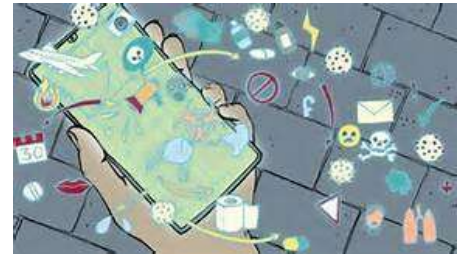


Coronavirus: How to protect your mental health

If you are feeling your anxiety levels rising due to the coronavirus outbreak, firstly, it is important for you to know you are not alone and secondly there are ways to protect your mental health during this difficult time.

If you find watching the news or the constant circulation of information on social media too much, limit the amount of time you spend reading or watching things that are not making you feel better.



Perhaps decide on a specific time to check in with the news. You can also mute stories or hashtags that are causing you any distress.

There is a lot of misinformation swirling around - stay informed by sticking to trusted sources. The following sources will provide you with accurate information:

- ✓ NHS website
- ✓ 111.NHS.UK
- ✓ GOV.UK website
- ✓ World Health Organisation (WHO)

How to keep yourself occupied

You might find it helpful to set some structure to your day to help you keep a daily routine. There is also a range of activities you can do to protect your mental health and wellbeing.



TALK & LISTEN,
BE THERE,
FEEL CONNECTED

Stay connected with people

If you have to self-isolate it is important that you stay connected to your friends and family. We are lucky that social media and our phones allow us to keep in contact with the people we care about. Use your phone, write emails, send video messages.



DO WHAT YOU CAN,
ENJOY WHAT YOU DO,
MOVE YOUR MOOD

Be active

You may not have much space in your garden, but that doesn't mean you can't exercise. You can still go for a walk or run if you keep to social distancing guidelines. National Trust are to open parklands and gardens for free during this period, this is a good opportunity to walk and explore new areas. There are lots of free apps, YouTube videos and online resources to help you work-out at home.



REMEMBER
THE SIMPLE
THINGS THAT
GIVE YOU JOY

Take notice

Remember the things that make you HAPPY!

Make a thankful jar – even in these difficult times, there are plenty of things to be grateful for. Create a time capsule of things that bring you joy. Plant some seeds and watch them grow. Write a journal or spend some time doing something artistic. Now is a good time to take notice of the beauty in your local surroundings.



EMBRACE NEW
EXPERIENCES.
SEE OPPORTUNITIES.
SURPRISE YOURSELF

Keep learning

Now is the time to develop a new skill and learn more about the world we live. Maybe you have an instrument that you have never mastered or a desire to learn how to crochet, origami, a new language or to cook - now is the time! There are plenty of free tutorials online to help you learn new skills.

You may not be able to visit a museum but you can take a virtual tour of one - https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours?fbclid=IwAR3MqGu_OgxTkJdue9TFcfza7lappGL7pDq-D2AVhpIDLH35jiPfcZrK6Qw

You could also take a virtual field trip to one of the following places:

San Diego Zoo - <https://kids.sandiegozoo.org/>

Mars - <https://accessmars.withgoogle.com/>

The Louvre - <https://www.louvre.fr/en/visites-en-ligne>



Your time,
your words,
your presence

Give

You may not be able to visit elderly relatives; this does not mean you can't show them you care. You could write them a good old-fashioned letter and a little care package to open with some photos and treats to make them smile. You could offer to collect food for them or items that they need.

If you need extra support, you can visit one of the sites below or phone your GP:

www.mind.org.uk

www.samaritans.org



"Nothing beats kindness," said the horse. "It sits quietly beyond all things."